

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-07 L-03 NSC-07 CIAE-00 DODE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04 RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-03

AID-20 PC-04 DRC-01 EB-11 SIL-01 LAB-06 /115 W

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P R 271530Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4005

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 1636

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

EO 11652 GDS

TAGS: PINT NU

SUBJ: IMPLEMENTATION OF MEDIA CENSORSHIP

REF: MANAGUA 1617

1. ON SECOND DAY OF IMPLEMENTATION OF MEDIA CENSORSHIP DECREE DESCRIBED REFTEL GON SUDDENLY WITHDREW MILITARY CENSORS FROM OPPOSITION LA PRENSA AND INFORMED PUBLISHER CHAMORRO THAT HE MUST SEND PROOFS OF EACH ISSUE TO A SPECIAL COORDINATING OFFICE AT THE MANAGUA POLICE HEADQUARTERS TO OBTAIN PRIOR AUTHORIZATION FOR THEIR PUBLICATION. CHAMORRO WAS ADVISED THAT THE OFFICE WOULD BE OPEN FROM 0800 TO 1200 AND 1500 TO 1830 DAILY AND THE CENSOR ASSIGNED TO HIS NEWSPAPER WAS ALEJANDRO ORTEGA A CIVILIAN, AND FORMER EDITOR OF THE SOMOZA-OWNED NOVEDADES. CHAMORRO TOOK THE POSITION THAT IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO COMPLY WITH THIS ORDER AND LA PRENSA WAS THEREFORE NOT PUBLISHED APRIL 26. WE UNDERSTAND LA PRENSA MAY ATTEMPT TO MEET CENSORSHIP REQUIREMENTS AND TRY TO PUBLISH APRIL 27.

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2. NOVEDADES CONTINUES TO RECEIVE FAVORED TREATMENT. IT REPORTEDLY DID NOT HAVE TO TAKE COPY TO POLICE HEADQUARTERS BUT WAS CENSORED ON SITE BY ALEJANDRO CALDERA, A CIVILIAN AND FORMER CHIEF EDITOR OF NOVEDADES WHO IS CURRENTLY PUBLIC RELATIONS CHIEF OF SOCIAL SECURITY (INSS). CENSORSHIP WAS NOT APPARENT IN APRIL 26 ISSUE WHICH CONTAINED PROMINENT ARTICLE UNDER HEADLINE: "CONSTRUCTION STRIKE GENERALLY REPUDIATED" TOGETHER WITH PICTURE OF SIT-DOWN STRIKERS ON CONSTRUCTION SITE, ARTICLE ANNOUNCING THE OFFICIALLY SPONSORED "WORKERS MAY DAY CONCENTRATION" AND BLISTERING EDITORIAL ATTACKING STRIKE LEADERS AND LA PRENSA AND SUPPORTING CENSORSHIP (WHY NOT?).

3. THERE WERE NO MORNING RADIO NEWS BROADCASTS APRIL 26 BECAUSE STATIONS WERE UNABLE TO OBTAIN PRIOR CLEARANCE OF THEIR MATERIAL SINCE RADIO CENSOR'S OFFICE DID NOT OPEN UNTIL LATER IN MORNING. NOON AND AFTERNOON BROADCASTS WERE HEAVILY CENSORED ON BROAD RANGE OF SUBJECTS. LOCAL AP STRINGER WHO HAS POPULAR RADIO NEWS PROGRAM TOLD EMBASSY OFFICIALS THAT HE WAS NOT ALLOWED TO BROADCAST WIRE SERVICE REPORTS ON REVOLUTION IN PORTUGAL, VENEZUELAN WORKERS SUPPORT FOR PORTUGUESE REVOLUTION AND RAILROAD STRIKE IN COSTA RICA. HE WAS ALSO PROHIBITED FROM BROADCASTING TAPED INTERVIEW WITH A CONSERVATIVE (PCN-P) LEADER WHO EXPRESSED VIEW THAT SOMOZA'S NOMINATION THIS COMING SUNDAY WOULD BE CONSTITUTIONALLY QUESTIONABLE IF CONSTITUTION WERE NOT OFFICIALLY PUBLISHED BEFOREHAND. INCLUDED IN MATERIAL WHICH MUST BE SUBMITTED FOR PRIOR CENSORSHIP ARE VOA FEEDS FOR REBROADCAST ON LOCAL STATIONS.

4. OUTGOING WIRE SERVICE REPORTS HAVE NOT BEEN FORMALLY CENSORED THOUGH STERN WARNINGS HAVE BEEN ISSUED FOR APPARENT VIOLATIONS OF TACIT GUIDELINES. ACCORDINGLY, STRINGERS REPORT THEY ARE NOW TRANSMITTING REPORTS VIA TELEPHONE.

5. COMMENT: RAMPANT RUMORS OF ALL SORTS ARE THE MOST IMMEDIATE RESULT OF CENSORSHIP IMPLEMENTATION TO DATE, WHICH TENDS TO ADD TO ALREADY CONFUSED STRIKE SITUATION.
SHELTON

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